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THE

# Faith of Baptists.

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By T. T. EATON, D.D., LL.D.

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## THE FAITH OF BAPTISTS.

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BAPTISTS rejoice to hold in common with many others the doctrines of grace and the great principles that make up the Evangelical faith. They lay special emphasis, however, on the importance of strict conformity to Bible teaching. God is wiser than men, and He alone has the right to command us. We do not consider that "something else will do as well" as what is commanded, nor do we believe that "it makes no difference" whether we obey God's requirements or not. We draw no line between "essentials" and "nonessentials" when we come to obey the commands of our Lord. Nothing large enough for God to command is so small that we can label it "nonessential," and neglect it with impunity. "Ye are my friends if ye do"—the essentials? nay, verily, but—"whatsoever I command you." These are the words of our Redeemer and Lord before whom we must stand at last to be

judged. It is God with whom we have to do and whom we must please.

Three prominent points on which Baptists differ from other denominations, regarded as Evangelical, are: First, The Church; Second, Baptism, and Third, The Lord's Supper. Baptist doctrines on these subjects follow as corollaries to their fundamental doctrines of direct and personal responsibility to God and of absolute submission to Scripture teaching. But these three things are most discussed, and hence most prominent. Let us consider them in their order, and let our aim be to see clearly just what the Bible teaches on these subjects.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE CHURCH.

WE find nothing in the Old Testament on these subjects, full as it is of most important lessons on other matters. It has absolutely nothing to say on either the Church, Baptism, or the Lord's Supper. These things belong wholly to the new dispensation and not at all to the old. The only passage that might seem at variance with this statement is Acts vii.38, where the children of Israel are spoken of during their wandering as "the church in the wilderness," but here the translation should be "congregation" instead of "church." The Revised Version puts "congregation" in the margin. Meyer translates it "assembly;" similarly the Bible Commentary, the Pulpit Commentary, and others. Indeed, so far as I know, this is not denied by any competent scholar.

Turning to the New Testament we find the word church used in two special senses, first as a local body of baptized believers, and second as including all the redeemed of all ages and lands. We nowhere find the word applied to a

territorial organization. We do not read of the *church* of Judea, or of Asia, or of Galatia; but it is ever—"the churches of Judea" (Gal. i. 22), "the churches of Asia" (I. Cor. xvi. 19), "the churches of Galatia" (I. Cor. xvi. 1; Gal. i. 2), "the churches of Macedonia" (II. Cor. viii. 1), the plural always being used when more than one local body is included. On the other hand we read of "the church which was in Jerusalem" (Acts xi. 22), "the church of God which is at Corinth" (I. Cor. i. 2), "the church of Ephesus" (Rev. ii. 1), and so on. There is no warrant for calling a denomination a church, as when we speak of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church, the Roman Catholic Church. *A church cannot be composed of churches.* If the local body be called a church, then the denomination should not be called so. There are persons who speak of "the Baptist Church," meaning the Baptist denomination. There are many thousands of Baptist churches, but there is no such thing as "the Baptist Church."

The Greek word ἐκκλησία originally meant "called out," and was used to describe a secular body in Athens and other Greek cities, but it always referred to a local assembly. It is



used in this sense in Acts xix. 32, 39, 41, where the mob in the theatre of Ephesus is called ἐκκλησία, which is translated "assembly." This was not a religious organization at all, but was a local assembly, and the use of the word serves to emphasize the idea that a church is a local body. The same is true of the passage, Acts vii. 38, above mentioned, where Luke records Stephen as speaking of the "congregation in the wilderness" as "the church (ἐκκλησία) in the wilderness." The Israelites are nowhere referred to as a church except when they were all in one local body in the desert.

Since all the redeemed are "called out" from the world we find the term applied to them collectively, e.g. "On this rock I will build my church" (Matt. xvi. 18); "Christ is the head of the church;" "as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. v. 23, 25). "The church," as the bride of Christ, includes all who are saved, of all ages and lands.

These local churches, the only kind known to the New Testament, were independent bodies and were subject to no central authority. There is no hint of the existence of any such higher authority in the Bible, and all that is said to the churches and about them assumes their entire independence. Gibbon, the his-

torian, will not be suspected of any partiality for the Baptists, and yet he says, speaking of the churches in Apostolic times: "The societies, which were instituted in the cities of the Roman empire, were united only by the ties of faith and charity. Independence and equality formed the basis of their internal constitution." (Decline and Fall, I, p. 554.) Mosheim, the great ecclesiastical historian, says (Vol. I, Century I, Ch. XIV, p. 107): "The churches, in those early times, were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers and its own laws."

Archbishop Whately says: "It appears plainly from the sacred narrative, that though the many churches which the apostles founded were branches of one *spiritual* brotherhood, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the heavenly Head—though there was one Lord, one faith, one baptism for all of them, yet they were each a distinct, independent community on earth, united by the common principles on which they were founded, and by their mutual agreement, affection and respect: but not having any recognized head on earth, or acknowledging any sovereignty of one of these societies over others."—*Kingdom of Christ*, p. 36.

Ruskin says: "The word (i.e. church) occurs in the New Testament, as I said, one hundred and fourteen times. In every one of those occurrences it bears one and the same grand sense: that of a congregation or assembly of men."—*Construction of Sheepfolds*, p. 7.

Gibbon, the historian, was not identified with any church, while Archbishop Whately was a leading light of the Church of England (Episcopal), and Mr. Ruskin is the leading literary man now alive. To their testimonies many more might be added.

The Apostolic churches were composed entirely of believers. There is no hint of any infant membership or of any catechumens. Paul addresses "the church of God which is at Corinth" as "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints," etc. The other Epistles are quite similar. In Acts ii.47, we read, according to the Revised Version: "And the Lord added unto them day by day those that were being saved." Such language is true only of believers. More of this later.

The officers of a New Testament church were bishop (elder or pastor) and deacon. The terms bishop and elder are used indifferently of the same person and do not mark two classes of preachers. In writing to the Philippians Paul

addresses "all the saints which are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." (Phil. i. i.) Had there been any other class he would certainly have named them. In the twentieth chapter of Acts (v. 17) we have the account of Paul's sending from Miletus "to call the elders of the church" at Ephesus. When they came he exhorted them and bade them an affectionate farewell. Among other things he told them: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops," as the Revised Version has it. (Acts xx. 28.) The word is ἐπίσκοπος, which is elsewhere rendered *bishop*. Here then the same men are called both "elders" and "bishops."

In the third chapter of I. Timothy we have clearly set forth the qualifications of bishops and deacons, with no hint of any other order. Had there been any order between bishop and deacon, as e. g. priest or ruling elder, it is incredible that Paul would have skipped such order and gone at once from bishop to deacon. It were easy to cite the concessions of leading Episcopalian scholars that in New Testament times *bishop* and *elder* were the same, and therefore such a thing as *diocesan episcopacy* was unknown. The best scholar the Church of England has produced, Bishop Lightfoot, says: "It

is a fact now generally recognized by theologians of all shades of opinion, that in the language of the New Testament the same officer in the church is called indifferently 'bishop' (ἐπίσκοπος) and 'elder' or 'presbyter' (πρεσβύτερος).—*Com. on Philipians*, p. 95.

Equally without foundation is the claim for "ruling elders," as distinguished from preaching elders, in the churches. There is only one passage which has any semblance of pointing in this direction, viz. I. Tim. v. 17: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine." It is urged that here we have two distinct classes of elders indicated, those who rule, and those who preach. But instead of having two classes we have simply a specification under the one class. Take the parallel passage in this same chapter (v. 8): "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." It will not do to say that here we have two distinct classes, "his own" and "those of his own house." It is evident that the latter are included in the former, and that we have simply a specification under the one class. Again (Gal. vi. 10): "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good

unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Will any one claim that here are two distinct classes, and that those "who are of the household of faith" are not included in "all men"? So in the other case, "those who labor in the word and doctrine" are not a distinct class of elders, but are simply a specification under the one class of "elders that rule well," who are "counted worthy of double honor."

If there were ruling elders, as distinguished from preaching elders, in the Apostolic churches, why did not Paul address them, when writing to the churches, as he addressed "the bishops and deacons"? And why were they omitted when the qualifications were given for bishops and deacons? The fact is "ruling elders," who were not preachers, were unknown till John Calvin started them.

The idea of a priest in a church is utterly contrary to the whole spirit of New Testament Christianity. Christ is the one and only priest who once for all made the offering for sin, of which all the offerings of the Levitical priests were but types and symbols. When the cry went up from the cross, "It is finished"—"the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom," and no more sacrifices were



to be offered forever. The ritualistic dispensation was ended, and the new spiritual dispensation should henceforth obtain. Jesus "bore our sins in His own body on the tree," and He is the one sin-bearer. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us," and He is the one intercessor. To bring in any other sin bearer or intercessor is to declare that the work of Christ is insufficient.

Even the Apostles were in no sense priests. They offered no sacrifices for the early Christians and made no intercession for them. They were specially inspired, endued with special authority, and given power to work miracles. In the very nature of the case they could have no successors. If any man were truly a successor to the Apostles he would be able to work miracles and to give us additional Scripture as much inspired as any already given. Paul's, and John's and Peter's Epistles are as truly and as fully inspired as any other parts of the Bible. "Apostolic succession" therefore is a baseless figment of the imagination, without any foundation in Scripture, in reason, or in fact. Dean Alford concedes this.

The famous historian, Macaulay, himself a member of the Church of England, in his essay on Church and State, discusses the doctrine of

“apostolical succession,” and says: “It is probable that no clergyman in the Church of England can trace up his spiritual genealogy from bishop to bishop so far back as the time of the conquest. There remain many centuries during which the transmission of his orders is buried in utter darkness. And whether he be a priest by succession from the Apostles depends on the question, whether during that long period, some thousands of events took place, any one of which may, without any gross improbability, be supposed not to have taken place. We have not a little of evidence for any one of these events. We do not even know the names or countries of the men to whom it is taken for granted that these events happened. . . . That during this period, the overseers of all the little Christian societies scattered through the Roman empire, held their spiritual authority by virtue of holy orders derived from the Apostles, cannot be proved by contemporary testimony, or by any testimony which can be regarded as decisive. . . . We will not therefore go as far as Chillingworth. We only say that we see no satisfactory proof of the fact, that the Church of England possesses the apostolical succession.”—*Macaulay's Essays*, Vol. II, pp. 372, 376.

A New Testament church is then a local congregation of baptized believers—or “saints,” as Paul calls them—banded together on their profession of faith for the maintenance of the ministry of the word and of the ordinances of the gospel, and to win the world to Christ. It is not a sort of contrivance into which sinners are to be thrown and by being subjected to certain rites, ceremonies, etc., to be changed into Christians. No man should join a church in order to be saved. He must not join until he is saved, and ready to go forward in obedience to Christ’s commands. Just the worst place in the world for an unsaved man is in a church. He flatters himself that somehow it will be well with him because he is a church member; and he does not take to himself the exhortations from the pulpit to come to Christ. Christian friends do not labor with him or for him, and he is allowed to go on to death, to cry at last in vain, “Lord! Lord!” and to hear the awful sentence, “Depart”—“I never knew you.”

New Testament churches were composed of bishops (or pastors), deacons and saints, as Paul writes to the Philippians—these three classes, and they are not “orders.” When a man is ordained deacon or bishop he does not thereby take rank above his brethren. He is simply as-

signed to a special service. No one man can outrank any other man in a New Testament church. All are brethren, absolutely on an equality so far as rank and privilege are concerned. Jesus Christ is the only Master in Zion. Saint, in the New Testament sense, has a very different meaning from that in which the word is generally used. The canonizing of certain persons by the Roman Catholics, and the title Saint, given to certain New Testament characters, has given the word a wrong meaning in the popular mind, and has obscured the meaning of the Scripture term. The Apostles never spoke of each other as saints, and never used the term saint as a title. Paul never said "St. Peter," "St. Matthew," "St. Mark," "St. Luke," or "St. John." Nor did either of them ever say "St. Paul." The headings of the books in our Testaments, be it remembered, are not inspired: only the text is God's Word. If we give the title "saint" to these servants of God, why not go farther and say, "St. David," "St. Isaiah," "St. Jeremiah," and "St. Ezekiel"?

No, a New Testament saint is not a canonized man nor one who is perfect, but simply a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul addresses the church at Corinth as saints, and yet he brings very grave charges against them.

Those who were "saved" were added to the church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. They had "gladly received the word." And no man has any right to offer himself for membership in a church unless this is true of him, and unless he has repented toward God and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Nobody joined a church in the Apostolic times without a profession of faith. It was true, however, then as it is true now, and as it will be true to the end, that there were those received into the churches who were unconverted; such as Simon Magus, Ananias and Sapphira. And Paul calls upon the church at Corinth to exclude a wicked member. The Bible teaches clearly the doctrine of a regenerated church membership; that each member must be required, since we cannot see the heart, to make a credible profession of faith.

The highest ecclesiastical authority in the world is that of a local church, in which all the members are equal and call no man master. Baptists have ever insisted upon soul liberty, and have ever resisted unto death the claims of any man or set of men to come between the individual soul and Christ. He and He alone is Lord of the conscience. I thank God for the

noble heritage of the Baptists in this matter of religious freedom.

Prof. Austin Phelps, of Andover Theological Seminary, says: "Even Thomas Jefferson confessed that his first clear conception of a republic came from the polity of an obscure Baptist church in Virginia."—*My Portfolio*, p. 125.

Sir James McIntosh says: "The Baptists suffered more than any others under Charles II., because they professed the principles of religious liberty."

And John Locke, the philosopher, whose essay on Toleration has been believed by some to have been the beginning of modern religious freedom, says: "The Baptists were from the beginning the firm advocates of absolute liberty."

Our American historian, Bancroft, says: "Freedom of conscience, unlimited freedom of mind, was, from the first, the trophy of the Baptists."—*Hist. U. S.*, Vol. II, pp. 66, 67, 14th ed.

James Anthony Froude, the historian and essayist, says, in his life of John Bunyan: "The Baptists are the most thorough-going and consistent of all the Protestant sects."—*Bunyan*, p. 35.

Froude also says, speaking of the persecu-



tions of the Baptists of the Netherlands: "On them the laws of the country might take their natural course and no voice was raised to speak for them. . . . For them no Europe was agitated, no courts were ordered into mourning, no royal heart trembled with indignation. At their death, the world looked on complacently, indifferently or exultingly: for them history has no word of praise."—*Hist. of England*, Vol. II, p. 358.

Baptists hold that "the church was made for man and not man for the church."

A study of history shows that a departure from New Testament faith is ever accompanied by a departure from New Testament polity. Errors in church government crystallize and render permanent errors in doctrine. A right church polity is the mould of right doctrine, and thus it becomes of the greatest importance to preserve unsullied the polity given in the New Testament.

## CHAPTER II.

## WHAT IS BAPTISM?

BAPTISTS affirm that New Testament baptism is the immersion in water in the name of the Trinity of a believer on a profession of his faith by one duly set apart by a church for such service. Other denominations, while admitting this to be baptism, hold that sprinkling or pouring water upon a person is also valid baptism. But since all admit that the immersion is right, and many insist that sprinkling and pouring are wrong, why cannot all agree to take the immersion? Why be willing to be doubtful when you can be certain? Baptists are not trying to force on others a baptism they repudiate; but others are trying to force on us a baptism we repudiate, and often we are roundly denounced as "narrow" and "bigoted" for objecting to this. We simply ask other denominations to practice what they themselves admit to be valid baptism. This does not involve any surrender of conscience on their part; while for us to accept sprinkling and pouring would require a surren-

der of our consciences. Let no one say, therefore, that, at least so far as the matter of baptism is concerned, Baptists stand in the way of Christian union.

What is the proper act of baptism is to be determined by an appeal to Scripture. We must of course appeal to that part of the Bible which discusses the subject, and hence we come to the New Testament, since the Old Testament has nothing whatever to say on the subject. Passages of the Old Testament have, however, been cited in the baptismal controversy, one of which we mention. Is. lii. 14, 15: "As many were astonished at thee; (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:) so shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." It is claimed that this sprinkling is a prophecy of baptism, which is to be by sprinkling. Now I admit that if it had been proved that sprinkling was baptism then it might be argued with some plausibility that there was a prophecy of baptism in Old Testament passages which speak of sprinkling; but certainly this cannot be urged as proof that sprinkling is baptism. But the

contention vanishes into thinnest air when the passage is studied, and it is seen that the word *sprinkle* is a mistranslation, marring the sense of the language. It should be *astonish* or *startle*, and it is so translated in the margin of the Revised Version. The Hebrew word (*nazah*) is rendered in this passage by Gesenius: "So shall he cause many nations to rejoice in himself;" by Davies: "So shall he startle (or surprise) many nations." These two Hebrew lexicographers give as the first meanings of the word (Davies), "*to bound, to spring, of liquid to spurt, Hiph. to cause to leap for strong feeling, to make to start,*" and this passage in Isaiah is then cited. (Gesenius), "*to leap for joy, to exult, to spring.* The primary idea is that of *sparkling, flying out.* . . . Hiph. *to cause to leap for joy, to cause to exult, to make to rejoice,*" and then follows the translation above given of this passage. The Septuagint version (made by seventy learned Jews in the time of the Ptolemies and used in Palestine in the time of Christ, translates *nazah* by the Greek θαυμάζω, rendering the passage, "οὕτω θαυμάσονται ἔθνη πολλὰ ἐπ' αὐτῷ." "So shall many nations be astonished at him." And this becomes even plainer when we examine the passage in English, "As many were astonished at thee, (his visage was marred

more than any man and his form more than the sons of men")—an astonishing thing—"so shall he astonish many nations: the kings shall shut their mouths at him,"—in wonder—"for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." Thus the passage is made clear and intelligible, while by using the word "sprinkle" the meaning is obscured.

But the Old Testament has nothing whatever to say on the subject of baptism, and so we come to the New. Baptism began with John the Baptist, who was sent by God to preach and to baptize. We read, Mark i.4,5, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Now the act performed by John is expressed in the word Anglicized into *baptize*, the Greek verb βαπτίζω. Let us see what this word means in this passage. It is an admitted principle of language that the meaning of a word may be substituted for the word in a sentence without at all changing the sense. Let us apply this principle here. There are three English words claimed as translations of βαπτίζω in this pas-

sage, viz. *sprinkle*, *pour*, and *immerse*. Let us substitute each of these in the passage and note the results. “And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all *sprinkled* of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.” How could a man sprinkle people in a river? He might throw them in or drive them in, but the only way he could sprinkle them in would be first to reduce them to a liquid or a powder. We see that *sprinkle* in this passage does not make sense, and therefore it is not admissible to translate βαπτίζω by *sprinkle* here. Try *pour*. “And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all *poured* of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.” This is no better. John could not have poured the people in the river without first reducing them to a powder or a liquid. To talk about pouring people in a river is nonsense. And since the sense of the passage is destroyed by the use of the word *pour*, it is manifest that βαπτίζω does not here mean *pour*. Now try *immerse*. “And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all *immersed* of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.” This certainly makes sense. Preachers do often immerse people in



a river. I have done it many times myself. Therefore as between the three translations, *sprinkle*, *pour*, and *immerse*, in this passage, *immerse* alone can be taken because it, alone of the three, makes sense.

When men wish to determine the meaning of a word in any language they first turn to standard lexicons of that language and see what definitions are given, and these are applied to the passages in question. I might give the translations of any number of lexicons, but two will suffice; and since neither of these was prepared by a Baptist, neither can be suspected of any partiality for Baptist views. The standard Greek lexicon at all universities and colleges among English-speaking people is Liddell and Scott's, seventh edition. This lexicon gives the meaning of βαπτίζω as simply "to dip in or under water." It gives as a secondary meaning, "to draw wine by dipping." There is no hint of sprinkling or pouring. At the University of Virginia, at Harvard, at Yale, at Cornell, at Princeton, at Vanderbilt, etc., etc., Liddell and Scott is the standard Greek lexicon. Would it not be a marvel if Messrs. Liddell and Scott were ignorant of the meaning of βαπτίζω? The other lexicon I mention is Prof. Thayer's, based on Grimm's Wilke's German work. This

lexicon is the standard in all the theological seminaries of all the denominations and is a lexicon of the Greek used in the New Testament. This gives as meanings of βαπτίζω, "to dip repeatedly, to immerge, to submerge." A secondary meaning is given, "to cleanse by dipping or submerging," etc., and also, "to overwhelm." But this lexicon gives the following comment under this word: "In the New Testament it is used particularly of the rite of sacred ablution, first instituted by John the Baptist, afterwards by Christ's command received by Christians and adjusted to the nature and contents of their religion (see βάπτισμα, 3), viz. an immersion in water, performed as a sign of the removal of sin, and administered to those who, impelled by a desire for salvation, sought admission to the benefits of Messiah's kingdom." To the βάπτισμα (of which *baptism* is the Anglicized form), this lexicon gives only two meanings, "immersion, submersion," and under this word defines Christian baptism: as, "according to the view of the apostles, a rite of sacred immersion, commanded by Christ."

Now if βαπτίζω, the word chosen by the Holy Spirit to describe the act of baptism, has any such meanings as *sprinkle* and *pour*, is it not passing strange that these standard lexicog-

raphers never heard of it? They are not Baptists, and cannot be charged with any partiality for Baptist ideas; and we have seen what they say. Can it be they are mistaken? Could anything have deceived them in this matter? Why are their lexicons used as standards by scholars of all denominations? Either these lexicographers are ignorant of the meaning of βαπτίζω, or else John the Baptist immersed the people of Judea in the river of Jordan, and our Lord was immersed. What Jesus Himself did for baptism, He certainly meant for His disciples to do when He commanded them to be baptized; for else He preached one thing and practiced another. It is blasphemy to say that the preaching and practice of Christ were different.

The references to baptism in the New Testament all fit the idea of immersion, and do not fit the notions of sprinkling and pouring. In Mark vii. 4, the word rendered "wash" is βαπτίζω, and the meaning is plain. Mark, writing primarily for the Romans, stops to explain the absurd lengths to which the Pharisees carried their cleansings. "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash (ὀψώνται) their hands diligently,"—the Greek is, *with the fist*—"eat not, holding the tradition of the elders: and when they come from the market-

place, except they wash (βαπτίσωνται) themselves, they eat not: and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, washings (βαπτισμῶς) of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels." vv. 3 and 4. Now there would have been no point in Mark's stopping to explain that the Pharisees went to the great length of sprinkling or pouring water upon themselves on returning from market, when they while at home washed diligently, or "with the fist," before eating. That they would go to the length of immersing themselves on returning from market, where Gentiles had touched them, was a remarkable thing and worth explaining to the Romans, who did not know the customs of the Pharisees and strict Jews. Meyer, in loco, says: "In this case ἐὰν μὴ βαπτίσωνται is not to be understood of *washing the hands*, but of *immersion*, which the word in classic Greek and in the New Testament everywhere denotes, i. e., in this case, according to the context to take a bath. Having come from market, where they may have contracted pollution through contact with the crowd, they eat not, without having first *bathed*." Italics his.

As for the immersing of "cups, and pots, and brazen vessels," that was simply carrying out the ceremonial law, given in Leviticus xi. 32:

“And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherewith any work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; then shall it be clean.” The cups and pots were of wood, and these with the brazen vessels were to be immersed for cleansing, when they became ceremonially unclean, while earthen vessels were to be broken. The word rendered “tables” in the common version (*κλινας*) does not belong to the true text and the revisers have very properly omitted it.

It is an interesting and significant fact that in after years, copyists, not understanding the customs of the Pharisees, came to this passage, and thought the word *βαπτίζω* must be a mistake, since it seemed out of the question that Pharisees should actually immerse themselves when they come from market. So these copyists ventured to strike out *βαπτίζω* and insert *ραντίζω*, which means to sprinkle. They never suspected *βαπτίζω* could mean sprinkle or pour, or they would not have made the substitution.

It is written in John iii. 23, “And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came,

and were baptized." It is said that the "much water" here consisted of many springs, needed for camping purposes by the multitudes who followed John; but had this been true the passage would have read that "they were encamped in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there;" but when it is stated, "John was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there," it is evident that the much water was needed for the baptizing.

Turning to Acts i.5, we find a figurative use of βαπτίζω: "For John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." I note in passing that instead of "with water" and "with the Holy Ghost" in this and all other passages, where these expressions follow "baptize" in the New Testament, the translation should be "in water" and "in the Holy Ghost." The Greek is ἐν, and is the word from which the English *in* is derived and of which *in* is the translation. The Revised Version puts *in* in the margin, and the American revisers went on record as preferring to make the text read "in water" and "in the Holy Ghost" in all these passages. The British revisers did not deny that this was the right meaning, but being more conservative

than the Americans, they hesitated to make the correction. That the meaning is "in water" and "in the Holy Ghost" is not denied, so far as I know, by any leading scholar. And, besides, those who practice immersion, immerse with water, using no other element.

But this prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when "suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts ii. 2-4. Here the Spirit filled the house where they were sitting and filled them, and this is spoken of figuratively as a baptism, and very appropriately so. Peter in his sermon, however, referred to this gift of the Spirit as a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts ii. 17), and it is argued that baptism is therefore a pouring. The argument clearly stated is:

The gift of the Spirit at Pentecost is called  
a baptism.

The same thing is called a pouring.

Therefore baptism is pouring.



The absurdity of this argument is clearly seen the moment we apply it to other things; for example:

Christ is called in Scripture a rock.

Christ is called in Scripture a vine.

Therefore a rock is a vine

OR:

Christ is called a lamb.

Christ is called a lion.

Therefore a lamb is a lion.

OR:

Christians are called sheep.

Christians are called vine branches.

Therefore sheep are vine branches.

Speaking of the coming down of the Holy Spirit from above Joel calls it pouring; while speaking of the result on the people—filling the house and filling them—Jesus calls it a baptism. It was the Holy Spirit which was “poured,” while it was the *people* who were “baptized.”

The act of baptism is described in Acts viii. 36–39: “And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came

up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing." The 37th verse, not belonging to the true text, is very properly omitted in the Revised Version. The description of the baptism, however, could hardly be more complete. Reader, just read over that passage again carefully and ask yourself, what was it Philip did to that eunuch? That was done in the right way. Unless you went down into the water, were then baptized, and came up out of the water your baptism was not of the New Testament kind. I know it used to be said that where Philip baptized the eunuch was a dry region without water enough for immersion; and it also used to be said that the river Jordan was too small a stream to allow of immersion. But since so many travelers from this country have visited Palestine intelligent people have ceased such talk. Dr. Talmage immersed a man in the river Jordan, as many other American ministers have done. The river Sorek runs along where Philip and the eunuch went, and Dr. W. M. Thomson, author of *The Land and the Book*, describing that region, says that there is plenty of water there "to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends."

Many references to baptism are made in the Acts, without any description, but since so good a description is given in the 8th chapter, it could hardly be expected that it would be repeated. In the 9th chapter, for example, the baptism of Saul of Tarsus is mentioned, with the simple words, "And he arose and was baptized." Had sprinkling or pouring been employed there had been no need of his arising, since already kneeling he was in a position to receive the sprinkling or the pouring. And had the baptism mentioned in the 9th chapter differed from that described in the 8th chapter, the difference would certainly have been pointed out. Moreover, if any man can tell us how that baptism was performed, Paul is the man; and he writes to the Romans (vi.4): "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Conybeare and Howson render this passage: "With Him, therefore, we were buried by the baptism wherein we shared His death [when we sank beneath the waters]: that even as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we likewise might walk in newness of life." They add in a footnote: "This passage cannot be understood un-

less it be borne in mind that the primitive baptism was by immersion."

A prominent Presbyterian lawyer once said to me: "I have heard my pastor explain Romans vi.4, and it was never clear to me before." "How did he explain it?" I asked. "Why," said he, "he showed that Christ was not buried at all, that His body was laid on a shelf, in Joseph's sepulchre, and there being no burial in the case, this passage cannot mean immersion." Whereupon I got a New Testament and asked him to read I. Cor. xv.3,4: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." "There," said I, "you read that Christ *was buried*, while you report your preacher as saying He was not buried." "I see," said the lawyer, "and I suppose my pastor did not know this passage was in the Bible." "It is to be hoped so," I added.

It may be well to mention the baptism of the jailer at Philippi, recorded in Acts xvi.29-34. Paul and Silas are in the dungeon, with their feet "fast in the stocks." The earthquake comes and arouses and alarms the sleeping

jailer who would kill himself but for Paul's voice of warning. Then the jailer "called for lights, and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Here it is written the jailer "brought them out"—let us see where he led them. The narrative goes on: "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him and unto all that were in his house." This shows he led them out of the prison into his house, for here they are preaching to all in the house. We read on: "And he took them"—we will see later where he took them—"the same hour of the night,"—between twelve and one o'clock—"and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set meat before them, and rejoiced greatly," etc. They were thus taken from the prison into the jailer's house, thence out somewhere in the night, where he was baptized, and then he brought them "up into his house" again. Now is it likely that a new convert would carry the preachers out of the house between twelve and one o'clock at night if what he wanted was to have a little water sprinkled

or poured upon him and upon his household? The narrative is inconsistent with the idea of sprinkling or of pouring. And then, too, if this baptism had differed from that described in 8th chapter we may be sure Luke would have pointed out the difference. But it could not have differed since it is written, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Jesus performed but one act for baptism. He did not submit to sprinkling, pouring, and immersion, all three, and, telling us "the mode is nonessential," give us our choice of the three. No; He did but the one thing, and that, as I have shown, was immersion, and that is what He commands all who love Him to do. "If ye love me keep my commandments." "Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." I. John ii. 3, 4.

But it is objected that 3,000 persons could not have been immersed on the day of Pentecost, and therefore sprinkling or pouring must have been used. I answer. First: It is not said that 3,000 were baptized on that day. The language is that "there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." They may have been baptized at other times. Sec-

ond: It does not take any longer to immerse a candidate than to sprinkle or to pour water upon him, with the accompanying ceremony. Third: Not only 3,000, but several times that number could easily have been immersed on the day of Pentecost. Three Baptist preachers in six hours in Ongole, India, did immerse 2,222 candidates. According to this the twelve (for Matthias had taken Judas' place) could have immersed 13,332 persons. But there were more than twelve administrators, for it is written that in that upper chamber at Jerusalem there were "an hundred and twenty" present, and on the day of Pentecost "they were all with one accord in one place." It is evident therefore that there is no force in the objection that "three thousand could not have been immersed on the day of Pentecost."

It is argued that John's baptism, to which Jesus submitted, was not Christian baptism, and that our Lord was baptized in order to be inducted into his priesthood. It is urged that since certain sprinklings were in the consecration of the Aaronic priests, John must have sprinkled the water on Christ. It is strange that the same persons should urge both these arguments since they are mutually destructive, and to show this is why they are here men-



tioned together. If John's baptism was sprinkling and was not Christian baptism then sprinkling is wrong. The passage in Acts xix. 2-5, is relied upon to show a difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism. Those disciples at Ephesus "had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," and yet they claimed to have been baptized "unto John's baptism." They certainly had never heard John preach, since he preached about the Holy Ghost (Matt. iii. 11 and Luke iii. 16). They had probably been baptized by some who had heard John, and who did not understand the matter rightly. This baptism being defective was not valid and these candidates must be baptized. That a man has already received an improper baptism is no reason he should not be baptized rightly.

John's baptism was the only kind Jesus and the Apostles received, and if it were not Christian baptism, then those who established the first churches never received Christian baptism. The very word Christian is *Christ-ian*, and to say that what Christ did was not Christian is a contradiction. No, the Bible gives no warrant for drawing any distinction between John's baptism and Christian baptism. Christ did a certain thing and called it baptism; when He

commands us to be baptized, He must have intended for us to do *that thing*.

As for Christ's being baptized in order to be inducted into His priesthood, that is a notion utterly foreign to Scripture, and to the facts of the case. Jesus was not a priest after the order of Aaron at all, but after the order of Melchisedek, and was never "inducted into His priesthood," since He was "a priest forever," "having neither beginning of days, nor end of life." No ceremonial consecration was in order, since He was made a priest "not after a law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." Heb. vii. 16. In the seventh chapter of Hebrews, Christ's priesthood is discussed and the distinction between His priesthood and the Aaronic is emphasized. All the Aaronic priests must be of the tribe of Levi, and of the family of Aaron, while Christ was of the tribe of Judah. "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah: of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." Heb. vii. 14. And besides, in the consecration of the Aaronic priests there were various ceremonies in addition to the ablutions, shaving, being clad in special garments, etc., etc. Why were all these omitted if Jesus was baptized as a consecration to the priesthood? And it was

no part of John's business to consecrate Aaronic priests; that was the business of Caiaphas and Annas.

The early version of the New Testament into Syriac translates the Greek βαπτίζω by *amad*, which means immerse. The great "Thesaurus Syriacus," the highest authority on Syriac, defines *amad*, "*descendit, mersus est, baptizatus est*"—to descend, to immerse, to baptize.

In Greece, where the Greek language is still spoken, only immersion is practiced for baptism, and the Greeks laugh at the idea of βαπτίζω's meaning sprinkle or pour. If the Greeks do not know the meaning of a Greek word—who does know?

## CHAPTER III.

## THE TESTIMONY OF SCHOLARS.

I N all these discussions no Baptist scholar has been quoted, not for any lack of them, since they are abundant, but to show that the positions taken are sustained by the scholarship of other denominations.

It were easy to fill a large volume with such testimonies, but a few representative scholars from different denominations have been chosen as fair samples. Plenty more of the same sort are ready to be furnished on demand. Let the reader carefully consider that the statements herewith given come from men who themselves practiced sprinkling or pouring for baptism, and since they make such concessions against their own practice—are not the concessions true? How came they to say these things if they be not true? Being great scholars they knew the truth on this matter, and they were honest enough to tell it, even though it made against their own practice. Would they have made false concessions against their own practice?

## WHAT EPISCOPALIAN SCHOLARS SAY.

Bishop Lightfoot says (Comm. on Colossians, p. 182): "Baptism is the grave of the old man, and the birth of the new. As he sinks beneath the baptismal waters, the believer buries there all his corrupt affections and past sins; as he emerges thence, he rises regenerate, quickened to new hopes and a new life. . . . Thus baptism is an image of his participation both in the death and in the resurrection of Christ."

Dean Stanley says, in his "History of the Eastern Church," p. 117: "There can be no question that the original form of baptism—the very meaning of the word—was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters; and that, for at least four centuries, any other form was either unknown, or regarded, unless in the case of dangerous illness, as an exceptional, almost a monstrous case."

Archdeacon Farrar, in his "Life and Work of St. Paul," Vol. II, p. 220, says: "The life of the Christian being hid with Christ in God, his death with Christ is a death to sin, his resurrection with Christ is a resurrection to life. The dipping under the waters of baptism is his union with Christ's death; his rising out of the waters of baptism is a resurrection with Christ, and the birth to a new life."

Bishop Smith, of Kentucky, says: "Immersion was not only universal six or eight hundred years ago, but it was *primitive* and *apostolic*, no case of baptism standing on record by any other mode for the first three hundred years, except the few cases of those baptized clinically, lying in bed. If any one practice of the early church is clearly established it is immersion." Kendrick on Baptism, p. 150.

#### WHAT PRESBYTERIAN SCHOLARS SAY.

John Calvin, in his "Institutes," Book IV, Chap. XV, says: "The very word *baptize* signifies to immerse; and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

Dr. Philip Schaff, on Rom. vi. 4, says: "That the custom of baptism by immersion is alluded to is generally admitted."

On Col. ii. 12, he says: "The passage shows that immersion was the mode in the apostle's mind."

Again, in his "History of the Christian Church," Vol. I, p. 468: "The usual FORM of baptism was immersion. This is inferred from the original meaning of the Greek βαπτίζειν and βαπτισμός; from the analogy of John's baptism in the Jordan; from the apostle's comparison.

of the sacred rite with the miraculous passage of the Red Sea; with the escape of the ark from the flood; with a cleansing and refreshing bath, and with burial and resurrection; finally, from the general custom of the ancient church, which prevails in the East to this day.”

Dr. Thomas Chalmers, on Romans vi. 4, says: “The original meaning of the word baptism is immersion, . . . we doubt not that the prevalent style of the administration in the apostle’s days was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water.”

Dr. McKnight says, “On the Epistles,” p. 85: “He (Christ) submitted to be baptized, that is buried under the water by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection. In like manner, the baptism of believers is emblematical of their own death, burial and resurrection.”

Dr. Albert Barnes says, in his note on Rom. vi. 4: “It is altogether probable that the apostle in this place had allusion to the custom of baptizing by immersion.”

#### WHAT METHODIST SCHOLARS SAY.

John Wesley, in his “Notes on the New Testament,” on Rom. vi. 4, says: “*We are buried*



*with him*, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."

Dr. Tyerman, in his "Life and Times of Wesley," p. 130, says: "He (Wesley) refused to baptize a child of Mr. Parker's, second bailiff of the town, because the parents objected to its being dipped."

Adam Clarke says, in his "Commentary on the New Testament," on Col. ii. 12: "*Buried with him in baptism*; alluding to the immersion practiced in the case of *adults*, wherein the person appeared to be buried under the water, as Christ was buried in the heart of the earth."

George Whitfield, the great preacher, says, in his eighteenth sermon (p. 297): "It is *certain* that in the words of our text, Rom. vi. 3, 4, there is an allusion to the *manner* of baptizing, which was by *immersion*, which is what our church allows," etc.

#### WHAT LUTHERAN SCHOLARS SAY.

Meyer, in his "Commentary on the New Testament," on Mark vii. 4, says: "In this case *ἐὰν μὴ βαπτισ.* is not to be understood of *washing the hands*, but of *immersion*, which the word in classic Greek and in the New Testament everywhere denotes, i.e., in this case, accord-

ing to the context; *to take a bath*. See also Luke xi.38; Comp. Eccles. xxxi.25; Judith xii.7. Having come from market, where they may have contracted pollution through contact with the crowd, they eat not, without having first *bathed*."

Mosheim, "Ecclesiastical History," Vol. I, p. 129, says, speaking of the manner of baptism in the first century: "The sacrament of baptism was administered in this century, without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font."

Neander, "History of the Christian Religion and Church," Vol. I, p. 310, says of baptism in the first three centuries: "In respect to the form of baptism, it was in conformity with the original institution and the original import of the symbol, performed by immersion, as a sign of entire baptism into the Holy Spirit, of being entirely penetrated by the same. It was only with the sick, where the exigency required it, that any exception was made; and in this case baptism was administered by sprinkling."

Martin Luther himself says: "For to *baptize* in Greek is to *dip*, and *baptizing* is *dipping*. Being moved by this reason, I would have those

who are to be baptized to be *altogether dipped into the water*, as the word doth express, and as the mystery doth signify." Works, Wittemb. Ed., Vol. II, p. 79.

#### WHAT CONGREGATIONALIST SCHOLARS SAY.

Prof. L. L. Paine, D.D., of Bangor Theological Seminary, says: "It may honestly be asked by some, Was immersion the primitive form of baptism, and, if so, what then? As to the question of fact, the testimony is ample and decisive. No matter of church history is clearer. The evidence is all one way and all church historians of any repute agree in accepting it. We cannot even claim originality in teaching it in a Congregational seminary. And we really feel guilty of a kind of anachronism in writing an article to insist upon it. It is a point on which ancient medieval and modern historians alike, Catholic and Protestant, Lutheran and Calvinist have no controversy. And the simple reason for this unanimity is that the statements of the early fathers are so clear, and the light shed upon their statements from the early customs of the church is so conclusive, that no historian who cares for his reputation would dare to deny it, and no historian who is worthy of the name would wish to do so." Article in *Christian Mirror*.

The above was called out by some adverse criticism on the teaching concerning baptism in the Theological Seminary at Bangor, as follows: "Q. What was the apostolic and primitive mode of baptism? A. By immersion. Q. Under what circumstances only was sprinkling allowed? A. In cases of sickness. Q. When was the practice of sprinkling and pouring generally introduced? A. Not until the fourteenth century. Q. For what reason was the change adopted? A. As Christianity advanced and spread in colder latitudes, the severity of the weather made it impracticable to immerse."

Prof. Moses Stuart, in his book on Baptism, p. 149, says: "But enough. 'It is,' says Augusti, 'a thing made out,' viz., the ancient practice of immersion. So, indeed, all the writers who have thoroughly investigated this subject conclude. I know of no one usage of ancient times which seems to be more clearly made out. I cannot see how it is possible for any candid man who examines the subject to deny this."

#### WHAT ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOLARS SAY.

Cardinal Gibbons says: "For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion;

but since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by affusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience, than baptism by immersion." *Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 275.

In the Donay Bible, with Haydock's Notes, which have received the official endorsement of the Pope himself, and therefore come with the highest possible Roman Catholic authority, I find, on Matt. iii.6: "*Baptized*. The word baptism signifies a washing, particularly when it is done by *immersion* or by *dipping* or *plunging* a thing under water, which was formerly the ordinary way of administering the sacrament of baptism. But the church, which cannot change the least article of the Christian faith, is not so tied up in matters of discipline and ceremonies. Not only the Catholic Church, but also the pretended reformed churches, have altered this primitive custom in giving the sacrament of baptism, and now allow of baptism by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person baptized: nay, many of their ministers do it nowadays by flapping a wet finger and thumb over the child's head or by shaking a wet finger or two over the child, which it is hard enough to call a baptism in any sense."

Again, on Mark i.9, the same authority says:

“See notes on Matt. iii. That Christ was baptized by immersion is clear from the text; for he who ascended out of the water must first have descended into it. And this method was of general use in the church for 1300 years, as appears from the acts of councils and ancient rituals.”

Still, again, on Romans vi.4: “The apostle here alludes to the manner of administering the sacrament of baptism, which was then done by immersion or by plunging the person baptized under the water, in which he finds a resemblance of Christ’s death and burial under ground and of his resurrection to an immortal life.”

I will add a statement from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Article Baptism, Vol. III, p. 351: “The usual mode of performing the ceremony was by immersion. In the case of sick persons (clinici) the minister was allowed to baptize by pouring water upon the head, or by sprinkling. In the early church ‘clinical’ baptism, as it was called, was only permitted in cases of necessity, but the practice of baptism by sprinkling gradually came in in spite of the opposition of councils and hostile decrees. The Council of Ravenna, in 1311, was the first council of the Church to legalize sprinkling by leaving it to the choice of the officiating minister.”

These are but samples, and similar testimonies might be brought forward, enough to fill large volumes. And no one will deny that these are thoroughly representative scholars of the different denominations. We have purposely left out the Baptists. The question recurs: *How came these scholars to make these statements against their own practice, if they be not true?* Could they have been deceived? If so, what deceived them? Their prejudices and their practice lie on the side of sprinkling and pouring, and yet they say that Christ was immersed, that immersion was the practice of the Apostles and early Christians and that sprinkling and pouring are innovations introduced later. HOW CAME THEY TO SAY THESE THINGS IF THEY ARE NOT TRUE?

It is no answer to say that these men did not think it necessary to be immersed themselves and so continued to practice affusion. That is a matter of their consistency which has no bearing on our duty. *But if their statements be true, if Christ was immersed and if that was the practice of the Apostles,* then it is the solemn duty of every believer to be immersed, and he is not truly baptized until he has been immersed. And the very fact that the statements of these scholars are against their own practice



makes the statements much stronger. HOW CAME THEY TO SAY THESE THINGS IF THEY BE NOT TRUE? Do you not, dear reader, see that they are true; and that if you are a believer in Christ and have not been immersed, as taught in the New Testament, it is your solemn duty to go forward at once in this duty? Baptism is the only thing we are commanded to do, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Many commands are given us in the Scriptures, but this is the only one we are to obey in the name of the sacred Trinity. Will you say: "Ah! well, it is not essential, and it suits me to go on as I am; to be immersed now would separate me from many I love, and there are plenty of good people who are not immersed"? Will you say that, and thus seek to quiet your conscience? Then listen to the words of the Lord Jesus: "If ye love me keep my commandments," "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" And the Holy Spirit says through the Apostle John (I. John ii. 3, 4): "Hereby know we that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him."

Some years ago I was conversing about baptism with an esteemed minister of another denomination, and he said: "The older I grow and the more I love the Lord, the less I care for these nonessential things." I replied: "It does not affect me in that way. The more I love the Lord the more careful I am to do exactly what He requires, so nearly as I can find it out. It is written, 'He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me,' and 'If ye love me keep my commandments.'" Then I handed him a copy of the New Testament, asking him to read aloud the above passage, I. John ii. 3, 4. Taking the book, he read slowly: "Here-by-know-we-that-we-know-him-if-we-keep-his-com-mand-ments. He-that-saith-I-know-him-and-keep-eth-not-his-com-mand-ments—" Here he paused, laid the book down, walked away, and reported I said he was a liar.

What is the use in being wrong, when you can be right? What is the sense in being doubtful, when you can be certain?

## CHAPTER IV.

## WHO OUGHT TO BE BAPTIZED?

SINCE baptism is a positive ordinance, it is binding on us solely because it is commanded by our Lord. We are to perform the act laid down, and nothing else can be substituted for it: so only those are to be baptized who are included in the command. If baptism were a means of conveying grace to its recipients then it might be argued that it should be given to all who need the grace, and this is, virtually, the chief argument for infant baptism. As in the case of the act of baptism, so here in the case of the subjects our appeal must be to the Scriptures. Baptists hold that the Bible teaches that believers in Christ and none others are to be baptized. No example or precept for baptizing infants can be found in the Word of God, and the advocates of infant baptism do not claim any such example or precept. They claim, however, that by inference and deduction they can get a warrant for the practice from the Bible.

Turning to the Scripture we must pass over

the Old Testament, because it says nothing about baptism, and we must, of course, ever turn to those parts of the Bible which treat of the topic we are studying. Baptism began with John the Baptist, who was specially commissioned of God to preach and to baptize. He told the people to "repent" and to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." John's baptism is called (Mark i. 4) "the baptism of repentance," and since infants cannot repent, no infants were baptized by John. It is written (Mark i. 5), "And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." There could have been no infants among them, since infants cannot confess their sins.

Jesus Christ's example is against infant baptism. He was baptized at the beginning of His public ministry, and not in His infancy. Being sinless He could not repent and confess any sins, but in imitation of His example we are baptized as we enter publicly upon His service.

The great commission our Lord gave His disciples is: "Go ye therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you." The Greek word *μαθητεύσατε*, translated *teach* in the common version, means *to disciple*, as all scholars agree. The discipling comes before the baptism, and, therefore, only believers are to be baptized.

The disciples and early Christians baptized only believers. On the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 41), we read, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized," and this language precludes the idea of infants being baptized. Peter had said (v. 38), "Repent and be baptized every one of you," etc., putting repentance before baptism, and calling on only those who had repented to be baptized. In Samaria, under Philip's preaching (Acts viii. 12), it is written: "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." The mention of "men and women" shows there were no infants baptized there. And the same is true in all the baptisms recorded; in every case only believers are mentioned. In the cases of Paul, the eunuch, Simon, Crispus, Cornelius, Lydia, the jailer, Stephanas, and all the rest, there is no hint of the baptism of any but believers.

But are there not cases of the baptism of households mentioned, and may there not have

been infants in these? There are five household baptisms spoken of; let us examine them in order:

The first case is that of Cornelius, and we read (Acts x.44ff.), "While Peter yet spake these words the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." And in the 47th and 48th verses, Peter answered: "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." All who were there baptized had "heard the word," and had "received the Holy Ghost," as well as the Apostles had received Him; therefore no infants could have been among them.

The next case is Lydia, Acts xvi. 14, 15: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there." Not only is there no mention of any infants here, but all the conditions of the case are opposed to such a supposition. There is no hint that

Lydia was ever married and had any children at all. She was a traveling merchant, common at that time, and went from city to city selling purple cloth. Her home was in Thyatira (she is said to have been "of the city of Thyatira"), and here in Philippi she was on the other side of the sea and fully two weeks' journey from her home. Even if she were married, and even if she had infant children at that time, she would have hardly had them with her on this selling journey. Her household were her employes and attendants. Moreover the household of Lydia are called "brethren," in verse 40, of this same chapter.

The third case is the jailer and his family, Acts xvi.33,34: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." There could have been no infants, since it is stated that they all believed.

The fourth case is Crispus, Acts xviii.8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." Language could not declare



more clearly that only believers in this instance were baptized.

The fifth and last case is Stephanas, and here we have simply the statement of Paul, I. Corinthians i. 16: "And I baptized also the household of Stephanas," and the statement at the close of this Epistle, xvi. 15, "Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Here it is stated that the household of Stephanas had "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints," and that could not be true of infants. Luke had told us of Paul's visit to Corinth, when he founded the church there, and says, Acts xviii. 8, in connection with the conversion of Crispus, "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized," and the household of Stephanas must have been among them.

These five cases are all the household baptisms mentioned in the Scriptures; and it is evident they furnish no warrant whatever for infant baptism. Indeed, it is worthy of remark that there are but five such cases in the whole New Testament. Not long ago I went over the register of Walnut-street Baptist Church, Louisville, and found there were in the fellowship of that one church twenty-nine entire bap-

tized households. And there were many other households represented, not all baptized, because some members of the family remained unconverted, and yet which could have been added to the twenty-nine had these unconverted ones repented.

#### BAPTISM NOT IN PLACE OF CIRCUMCISION.

It is claimed that baptism came in the place of circumcision, that "the church is the same in all ages," and while under the old dispensation infants were taken into the church by circumcision, or their church membership recognized by that rite, under the new dispensation baptism has been substituted. We might trace analogies between baptism and circumcision, and the most obvious one is that as those who were the literal seed of Abraham received circumcision, so those who are the spiritual seed of Abraham, by faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians iii. 29), are to receive baptism; and this analogy is opposed to infant baptism, since infants cannot have faith in Christ. But the very meanings of the two ordinances are so different that it is impossible that the baptism of both sexes should be a substitute for the circumcision of the males. The Bible nowhere

declares, or even hints, that baptism has come in the place of circumcision, and this is all that the advocates of believers' baptism need to say. Those who affirm that baptism is a substitute for circumcision must prove it.

But since this is the argument chiefly relied on by the advocates of infant baptism, it is well to show how the idea of such substitution contradicts the plain teaching of the New Testament. There are three points worth noting in this connection.

1. When the controversy arose among the Jewish Christians at Antioch, as to whether believing Gentiles should be required to be circumcised, the matter was carried up to Jerusalem to be settled by a council of "apostles and elders." We have the account in the 15th chapter of Acts. Had baptism come in the place of circumcision this question could never have arisen, since everybody would have known that believing Gentiles, having been baptized, need not be circumcised. And even if we may suppose the substitution to have been made, and the Christians at Antioch so ignorant as not to have heard of it, in that case the decision of the council must have been to inform them that, since baptism had taken the place of circumcision, no baptized Gentile should be circum-

cised. But this council did not make any such answer, though the relation of circumcision to Christians was the very point under consideration. They made no mention of baptism in the connection, showing that they did not consider that there was any relation between baptism and circumcision. The decision of the council was: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." Acts xv. 24-29. No hint of baptism's having taken the place of circumcision, though that would have been the answer to the question had it been the

fact. Indeed so different, in their judgment, were baptism and circumcision, that a question concerning the latter did not even suggest the former to their minds.

2. Paul took Timothy and circumcised him after he had been baptized. (Acts xvi. 1-3.) This would have been impossible had baptism come in the place of circumcision, and Paul's action here flatly contradicts any such claim.

3. When Paul went up to Jerusalem for the last time the Apostle James, the pastor of the church there, and the brethren said to him (i.e., Paul), (Acts xxi. 20-24): "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that

thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law." And the chapter goes on to tell how Paul did this in order to contradict the report that he had taught Jewish parents not to circumcise their children. Had baptism come in place of circumcision, of course Paul must have taught Jewish parents not to circumcise their children, but to baptize them instead. I cannot see how Paul and James could more emphatically have contradicted the doctrine that baptism is a substitute for circumcision, than by their course in meeting that report.

Not only is there no foundation for the statement that baptism takes the place of circumcision in the New Testament, but its plain teaching flatly and emphatically contradicts such an idea.

But there are certain passages of Scripture which have been urged as teaching, or at least as involving infant baptism. Such a passage is Mark x. 13-16: "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom



of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

There is certainly no hint of infant baptism in this passage, nor could it ever have suggested the practice. The advocates of infant baptism seize eagerly upon every passage where infants are mentioned, but in order for such passages to avail for the argument they must mention infants and baptism in connection. In this passage there is mention of infants, but no hint of baptism, just as in other passages where baptism is mentioned there is no hint of infants. Those infants were brought to Christ, not to be baptized, but "that he should touch them." He did not baptize them—He baptized nobody. (John iv.2, "Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.") "He put his hands upon them and blessed them." A very different thing, this, from baptism.

It was the custom for parents to carry young children to famous rabbis and teachers to receive their blessing. These people had heard the fame of Jesus, and they brought their children "that he might touch them." Had infant baptism been practiced the disciples would have understood it, and would not have rebuked those who brought the infants. The very fact



of this rebuke proves that infant baptism did not then exist. Our Lord seizes upon this custom, and by it teaches a great fundamental principle of His kingdom, viz: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." This is Christ's explanation of what He means by saying, "Of such is the kingdom of God." The meaning of this passage is so plain to one who will take the pains to observe what it really does say, that it is a matter of surprise that it should be cited in proof of infant baptism. We have found many Pedobaptists who actually believed this passage stated that Christ baptized those young children.

Another passage often relied upon is I. Corinthians vii. 12-15, though usually only the 14th verse is quoted: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother is not under bondage in

such cases: but God hath called us to peace." It is claimed that the statement, "Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy," furnishes a warrant for baptizing children on the faith of one believing parent. But here again, where children are mentioned there is no hint of baptism. The Bible talks of baptism in some passages, and of infants in other passages, but never of both in the same passage. But if this passage furnishes such a warrant, as is claimed, it proves too much. The word rendered *sanctified* is the same as that rendered *holy*. Therefore, if children are to be baptized on the faith of a believing parent, then an unbelieving husband is to be baptized on the faith of his believing wife, and conversely.

But the meaning of this passage also is plain to those who take pains to observe just what it says, and what is the connection. The Apostle is instructing those husbands and wives who are married to heathen companions. Must a wife who is a Christian leave her heathen husband? No; answers the Apostle, "not if he be pleased to live with her." But if he will not submit to having a Christian wife and "depart, let him depart."

Dean Stanley says that this passage is "decisive against the practice of infant baptism" in

New Testament times. And Dr. Meyer—the most scholarly of all the commentators—says of this passage: “Had the baptism of Christian children been then in existence, Paul could not have drawn this inference, because in that case the ἀγνοῦν of such children would have had another basis. That the passage before us does not even contain an exegetical justification of infant baptism, is shown in the remarks on Acts xvi. 15.” Both Dean Stanley and Dr. Meyer practiced infant baptism, and these concessions are against their own practice.

It is written, Eph. iv. 5: “One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” There can be but one right baptism, just as there can be but one Lord and but one true faith. Believers’ baptism and infant baptism are not the same, and no reasoning can make them the same. It is generally admitted that believers’ baptism is taught in the New Testament, and since it is different from infant baptism, and antagonistic, since the universal prevalence of the one is the destruction of the other, and there can be but one right baptism, it necessarily follows that the baptism of infants is contrary to God’s Word.

Attempts have been made to argue from Jewish proselyte baptism to infant baptism. But Jewish proselyte baptism was and is im-

mersion. The strict Jews to-day immerse all Gentiles who join them. And Jewish proselyte baptism was not in existence in the New Testament or post-Apostolic periods. The Jews borrowed their baptism from the Christians, and, by the way, they would never have done this if they had had any idea that baptism was designed to supplant circumcision.

#### TESTIMONIES OF SCHOLARS.

Dr. Steitz, in Herzog's *Real Encyclopedia*, says that "among scientific exegetes it is regarded as an established conclusion that not a trace of infant baptism can be discovered in the New Testament." Vol. XV, p. 431.

*Neander*: "Baptism was administered at first only to adults, as men were accustomed to conceive baptism and faith as strictly connected." *Hist. Christian Rel.*, I, p. 424.

*Kitto*: "Infant baptism was established neither by Christ nor the Apostles. In all places where we find the necessity of baptism notified, either in a dogmatic or historical point of view, it is evident that it was only meant for those who were capable of comprehending the word preached, and of being converted to Christ by an act of their own will." *Cyclop. of Bib. Lit.*, I, p. 287.

*John Calvin*: "As Christ enjoins them to teach before baptizing, and desires that none but believers shall be admitted to baptism, it would appear that baptism is not properly administered unless preceded by faith." Harm. of Evang., III, p. 386.

*Martin Luther*: "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ or begun by the first Christians after the apostles."

*Richard Baxter*: "I conclude that all examples of baptism in Scripture do mention only the administration of it to professors of saving faith; and the precepts give us no other direction." Disp. of Right to Sac., p. 156.

*Adam Clarke*: "*Teach, μαθητεύσατε, make disciples of all nations*, bring them to an acquaintance with God who bought them, and then baptize them in the name of the Father. It is natural to suppose that adults were the first subjects of baptism; for as the Gospel was, in a peculiar manner, sent to the Gentiles, they must hear and receive it, before they could be expected to renounce their old prejudices and idolatries, and come into the bonds of the Christian covenant." Comm., Matt. xxviii. 19.

*Albert Taylor Bledsoe*: "Tertullian is the first writer in the church who makes any express

mention of the custom of infant baptism. Before his time, A.D. 200, there is not an allusion to the custom from which its existence may fairly be inferred." *Southern Review*, April, 1874.

*Olshausen*, commenting on I. Cor. vii. 14, says: "It is moreover clear that Paul could not have chosen this line of argument had infant baptism been at that time practiced."

*F. Schleiermacher* says: "All traces of infant baptism which one will find in the New Testament must first be put into it." *Christian Theol.*, p. 383.

These scholars all practiced infant baptism and they made these concessions against their own practice. *How came they to make them if if they are not true?* If these statements be false, how came these great scholars to be deceived against their own practice? If, however, they be true—and can there be any reasonable doubt of their truth?—then it is the duty of every Christian to oppose infant baptism and to advocate believers' baptism, as taught in Scripture.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER—CLOSE COMMUNION.

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread :

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take, eat ; this is my body, which is broken for you : this do in remembrance of me.

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood : this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.”

**B**APTISTS are often reproached for holding what is called “close communion.” And yet, so far as I know, everybody believes in close communion. It is a principle which all



denominations accept. No one argues that everybody, without regard to character or condition, is to come to the Lord's Supper. No one claims that murderers, wife beaters, and house burners should be invited to the Lord's Supper. That is close communion, because it places restrictions about the Lord's Supper. If a fence is to be put up at all around the Supper, you make an enclosure and you have close communion. It is with Christians not a question of whether there shall be close communion, but simply a question of where the fence shall be put. Some would enclose a larger area than others. How can we determine, therefore, where to place the fence? Is it a matter of our personal likings and preferences? The only way to settle the question is to appeal to Scripture. Let the fence be put wherever the Bible puts it, and let it be maintained there faithfully. Let no one, therefore, cry out against "close communion," because it is not a question among intelligent Christians of fence or no fence, of close communion or open communion, but simply of the degree of closeness, and this has not been left to us to decide. The Holy Spirit has given us directions in His Word, which make our duty clear.

It is hardly needful for me here to argue that

the Lord's Supper is a memorial ordinance. It is not a sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, as Roman Catholics teach; nor does it contain the body and blood of Christ in some mysterious way, as the Lutherans teach; nor is it an expression and symbol of Christian fellowship, as many evangelical Christians believe. The command is, "This do in remembrance of me," not in remembrance of each other, and in doing it we "shew the Lord's death till he come," and not our fellowship for Christians. Instead of Christians, communing together, each Christian is individually to commune with Christ, in the observance of this solemn ordinance. It is often asked, will we not all commune together in Heaven, and, therefore, should we not all commune together here at the Lord's Supper? The question shows a lack of information on Scripture teaching. There will be no Lord's Supper in Heaven. This ordinance is to be observed until Christ come, and not after His coming. We partake here of the symbols of an absent Savior. When we reach Heaven we will be in His immediate presence. We will have no Lord's Supper, and no baptism, and no churches in Heaven.

Turning to the New Testament we find three prerequisites laid down for participation in the

Lord's Supper: first, a credible profession of faith; second, baptism; third, an orderly church membership. Since nearly all Christians of all denominations admit that these prerequisites are laid down in Scripture, argument would seem to be needless; but since there are differences as to what these prerequisites mean, it is well to consider them a little.

1. A credible profession of faith.

We find in every reference to the Lord's Supper in the Bible there is no hint given that any except those who professed faith partook. When our Lord instituted the Supper, He had only professors present. On the day of Pentecost, and after, those who broke bread had before "gladly received the Word." The command uniformly given to the unconverted throughout the New Testament is to repent and believe. Nothing else is to be done before repentance and faith. The Corinthians to whom the Apostle says he delivered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, he calls "saints," and there is no hint of the presence among them of any who did not profess faith. For a man without faith to partake of the Lord's Supper, is to "eat and drink unworthily," and so bring condemnation to his own soul. Every argument in favor of believers' baptism applies equally in favor of be-

lievers' communion. The Greek Church (including Russia, Greece, and the East) observe infant communion along with infant baptism, and they use the same arguments which are used in favor of infant baptism, and there is no sort of reason why, if infants are to be baptized, they should not also partake of the Lord's Supper. I need not here repeat what has been said in favor of believers' baptism, and so we pass on to consider the next point.

2. Baptism is a prerequisite to participation in the Lord's Supper.

The Lord Jesus Christ was baptized at the beginning of His ministry. He instituted the Supper "the same night in which He was betrayed." (I. Cor. xi. 23.) Here we have His example for placing baptism before the Lord's Supper.

In the great commission (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20): "Go ye therefore, and teach (i.e., disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things," etc., baptism comes immediately after discipling, and although the Lord's Supper is not specifically mentioned, having just before that been instituted, it is obviously included in the "all things whatsoever I have commanded you," which the

baptized ones are to observe. Here, then, we have the command of Christ putting baptism before the Lord's Supper.

And such was the practice of the Apostles. On the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 41) "they that gladly received the word were baptized," and after that came "the breaking of bread." Under Philip's preaching in Samaria "they believed and were baptized, both men and women." Philip baptized the eunuch, and did not give him the Lord's Supper. Saul of Tarsus was baptized before he partook of the Lord's Supper. The same is true of Cornelius, of Crispus, of Lydia, of the jailer, etc. In every instance baptism followed immediately after the profession of faith, and there is no hint given anywhere that any one partook of the Lord's Supper before being baptized. Here, then, we have the example of Christ, the command of Christ, and the example of the inspired apostles in favor of putting baptism before the Lord's Supper.

In the very nature of the case baptism should precede. We are baptized but once, while we partake of the Lord's Supper often. Baptism is the public putting on of Christ, as a soldier puts on the uniform when he is enlisted, and so baptism belongs at the beginning of the Chris-

tian life. This is recognized by well nigh all Christians. The open-communion Baptists and the open-communion Disciples are the only ones on earth who would give the Lord's Supper to those whom they regard as unbaptized. And even *they* do not offer any Scripture authority for the practice, but simply make an appeal to sentiment.

3. An orderly church membership is a prerequisite.

The Apostle Paul, in the passage above quoted at length, says: "I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you." Who are the "you"? Turning to the beginning of the epistle, we find it is addressed "unto the church of God which is at Corinth" (I. Cor. i. 2). The Lord's Supper is therefore delivered to the church, and it is a church ordinance of which only church members are to partake. In Acts ii. 42, we read: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Here the doctrine and the fellowship are placed before the breaking of bread. Those who depart from the apostles' doctrine and from the fellowship of the church are not to be invited to the Lord's Supper. See I. Cor. vii. 12, and II. John 10, 11.



This, then, is the doctrine of "close communion" as Baptists hold it. And is it not right? Are we not carrying out the Scriptures in so doing? Are we to be denounced as "narrow," "bigoted," "selfish," etc., etc., simply because we faithfully carry out what the New Testament teaches? To put the matter before you practically, let us suppose that I am administering the Lord's Supper in my church, and a godly Presbyterian minister is sitting in the congregation, ought I to invite him to partake of the Supper? He has been sprinkled in infancy for baptism, and he regards that as valid baptism, but I believe he has not been baptized at all; since according to the New Testament teaching, and according to the best scholars in the world of all denominations, as we have seen, the baptism of the New Testament requires the immersion of a believer. If I were in his place, therefore, I could not conscientiously come to the Lord's Supper until I had been immersed on a profession of my faith. Could I as an honest man ask him to do what I could not conscientiously do myself were I in his place? To ask this question is to answer it.

But how about the Disciples? some will say. They have been immersed. Shall they not be



invited? Let us bear in mind the three prerequisites laid down, and let us see whether they have complied with them. The Disciples teach that baptism is in order to procure the remission of sins. They have cut themselves off from our Baptist churches, which Baptists are bound to believe are according to New Testament order, and therefore the Disciples have so far forth, been guilty of schism, and have turned their backs upon New Testament order. From the Baptist standpoint, therefore, they have not an orderly church membership. On the subject of the validity of their baptism Baptists differ, some churches receiving such baptisms, but the majority of our churches decline to receive them, and, I think, rightly; because they have perverted the design of the ordinance. When I was pastor in Petersburg, Virginia, a Methodist lady came to me, desiring to join our church. She had not been convinced of the truth of Baptist doctrine, but believed in Methodism as strongly as ever, only she hoped that being baptized would cure her rheumatism. Not long before that a Methodist gentleman in the city, who had long been afflicted with rheumatism, spent a large part of his time in reading the New Testament and having it read to him, and becoming convinced

that his infant sprinkling was not valid baptism, he decided to join the Baptists. His friends remonstrated, and told him that it would kill a man with rheumatism to get wet. But he persisted, was carried to the church in a carriage, and was lifted down into the baptistery in a chair, and was thus baptized. Strangely enough he never had the slightest trouble after that with rheumatism. This good woman knew of this case, and having "tried everything" in vain, she made up her mind to try joining the Baptists to cure her rheumatism. She greatly preferred to be a Methodist, but she preferred to be a Baptist without rheumatism to being a Methodist with rheumatism. Of course I declined to baptize her. But suppose she had joined our church, and I had immersed her in the pool; would that have been valid baptism? Certainly not; because the Bible does not teach baptism as a remedy for disease, and she would have made baptism simply a medicine, and this radical change of the purpose of the ordinance would have vitiated her obedience. But is it any worse to make baptism a medicine for the body than to make it a medicine for the soul? And if an immersion in order to get rid of rheumatism is not to be accepted, can we accept an immersion in order to get rid of sin? A baptism with a perverted design is not obe-

dience to the New Testament command, even though the act performed be immersion.

#### WHAT THE SCHOLARS SAY.

Neander, the great church historian, speaking of the observance of the Lord's Supper in the first century, says: "At this celebration, as may be easily concluded, no one could be present who was not a member of the Christian church, and incorporated into it by the rite of baptism."

Justin Martyr, who wrote in the middle of the second century, says about the Lord's Supper: "This food is called by us the eucharist, of which it is not lawful for any one to partake, but such as believe the things taught by us, and have been baptized." (Apol. 1 c. 65-66; Neander, Ch. Hist., vol. I, p. 327.)

Dr. Wall (Episcopalian) says: "No church ever gave the communion to any before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that were ever held, none ever maintained that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized." (Hist. Inf. Bapt., part II, c. 9.)

Dr. Doddridge (Presbyterian) says: "It is certain that, so far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, no unbaptized person received the Lord's Supper." (Lectures, pp. 5, 11, 12.)

Dr. Schaff (Presbyterian) says: "The communion was a regular part, and, in fact, the most important and solemn part, of Sunday worship . . . in which none but full members of the church could engage." (Ch. Hist., vol. I, p. 392.)

Dr. T. L. Cuyler (Presbyterian) says: "I do not suppose there is any difference between the Presbyterians and the Baptists in the terms of communion." (Letter to Dr. Christian, *Close Communion*, p. 83.)

The two leading Presbyterian papers in the United States are *The Observer*, of New York, and *The Interior*, of Chicago. *The Observer* speaks as follows: "It is not a want of charity which compels the Baptist to restrict his invitation. He has no hesitation in admitting the personal piety of his unimmersed brethren. Presbyterians do not invite the unbaptized, however pious they may be. It is not uncharitable. It is not bigotry on the part of Baptists to confine their communion to those they consider baptized."

*The Interior* says: "The difference between our Baptist brethren and ourselves is an important difference. We agree with them, however, in saying that unbaptized persons should not partake of the Lord's Supper. Their views compel them to think that we are not baptized, and shuts them up to close communion. Close

communion is, in our judgment, a more defensible position than open communion, which is justified on the ground that baptism is not a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper. To charge Baptists with bigotry because they abide by the logical consequences of their position is absurd."

Bishop Coxe (Episcopalian) says: "The Baptists hold that we have never been baptized, and they must exclude us from their communion table if we were disposed to go there. Are we offended? No. We call it *proper*, and we respect it. To say that we have never become members of Christ by baptism seems severe, but it is conscientious adherence to duty, as they regard it. I should be the bigot, and not they, if I should ask them to violate their discipline in this or any other particular." (Ch. Union, July, 1891.)

The Episcopalian Prayer Book lays down the law: "And there shall none be admitted to the holy communion until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."—Order of Confirmation at close.

The Episcopal *Recorder* says: "The close communion of the Baptist churches is but the necessary sequence of the fundamental idea out of which their existence has grown. No Christian church would willingly receive to its com-

munion even the humblest and truest believer in Christ who had not been baptized. With the Baptist, immersion only is baptism, and he therefore of necessity excludes from the Lord's table all who have not been immersed. It is an essential part of the system—the legitimate carrying out of this creed."

Dr. Hibbard (Methodist) says: "In one principle Baptist and Pedobaptist churches agree. They both agree in rejecting from the communion at the table of the Lord and in denying the rights of church fellowship to all who have not been baptized. The charge of close communion is no more applicable to the Baptists than to us Pedobaptists insomuch as the question of church fellowship with them is determined by as liberal principles as it is with any other Protestant churches—so far, I mean, as the present subject is concerned; i.e., it is determined by valid baptism." (Chr. Bapt., part II, p. 174.)

Dr. Tyerman (Methodist) says: "Even in Georgia, Wesley excluded Dissenters from the holy communion, on the ground that they had not been properly baptized, and he would himself baptize only by immersion, unless the child or person was in a weak state of health." (Oxford Methodists, p. 6.)

The *Methodist Discipline* says in reference to



the administration of the Lord's Supper: "No person shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper among us who is guilty of any practice for which we would exclude a member of our church." (Methodist Dis., sec. 408.)

The law of the Methodists requires that they shall exclude from their membership a man who is guilty of "inveighing against either our doctrine or discipline" (Sec. 283), or, also, "who hold and disseminate, publicly or privately, doctrines which are contrary to our articles of religion." Now, although the Methodists admit my baptism, and so far as that goes they might invite me to the Lord's Supper with them, yet they cannot consistently invite me because I teach publicly and privately contrary to their doctrines. If I were a preacher among the Methodists to-day, they would exclude me for holding and advocating Baptist doctrine, and then they could not invite me to the Lord's Supper. With what sort of propriety, therefore, could they invite me as the case now stands, since I am guilty of an offense that excludes from their fellowship and from their table?

If, then, such be the principles which are taught in the New Testament, are we not under the highest obligation to believe and maintain them always and everywhere? Shall we subordinate New Testament teaching to our con-



venience, to our friendships, or to our family relationships? Feeling in our hearts a sincere charity for all, an earnest love for all God's people, and a hearty joy in all the good that is done in the world, shall we not stand true to what the Bible says? Does where we live or whom we marry take away our obligation to obey the Scriptures? Shall we allow an appeal to our sentiment to move us from the solid rock of God's Word? Is not pleasing God of infinitely more importance than either pleasing ourselves or pleasing men? Has not God committed to us these teachings as a sacred trust, and shall we not be faithful? We may rely upon it, the Judge at the last great day will not say unto us, "Well done, good and faithful servant," unless we have been faithful to His will. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say." "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him." These are the words of Scripture. In the light of them we must live, die, and be judged. Will you not act now in the way you will wish you had acted when you stand to render your account?

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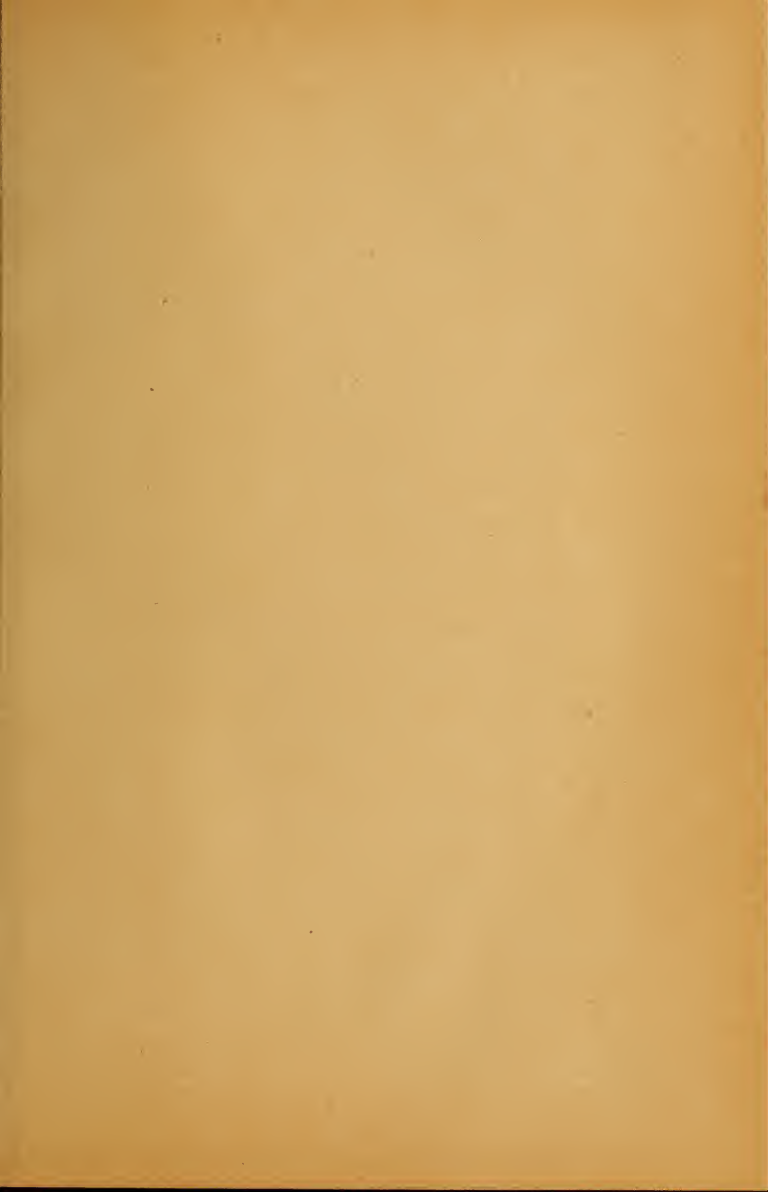
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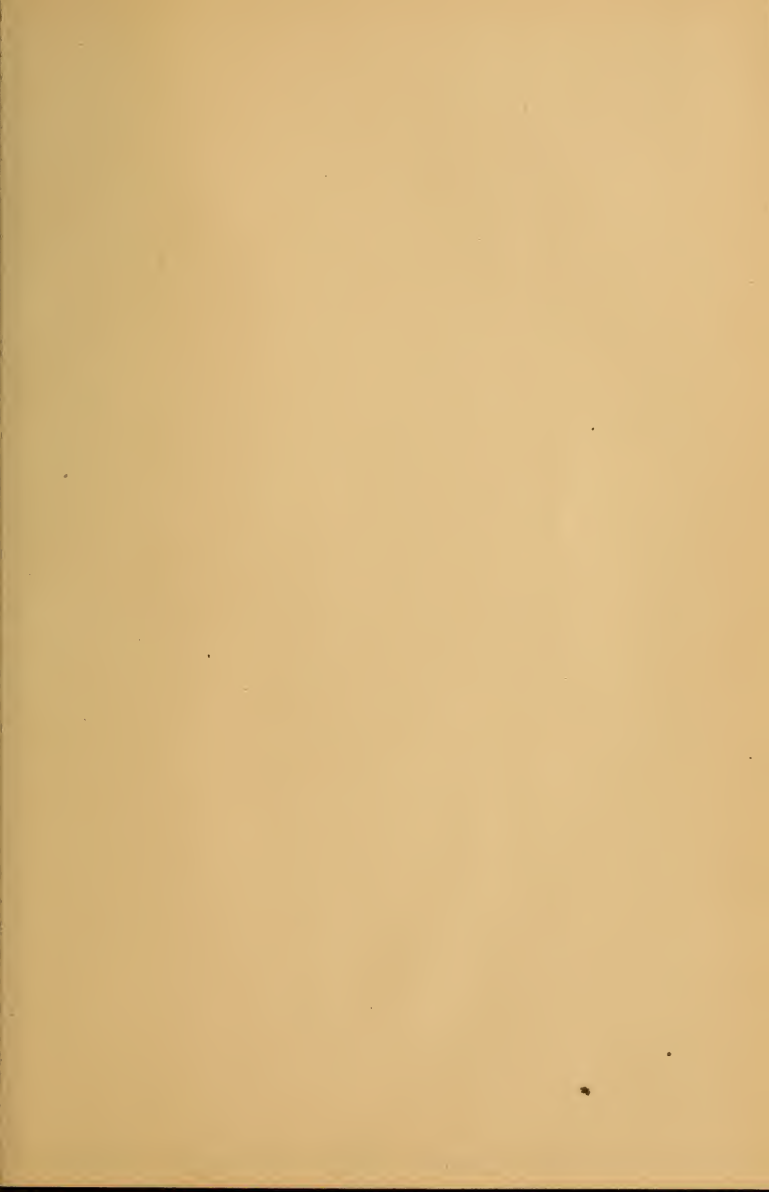
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